

(WASHINGTON) - Congressman Chet Edwards announced that he has secured funding to help law enforcement in Waco and McGregor upgrade their security and communications technology, help Baylor invest in aerospace engineering research, provide high tech job training for veterans at TSTC, and improve financial literacy in underserved communities. The funding was included by Edwards in the final 2010 Appropriations bill, which passed the House today by a vote of 221 to 202 and is expected to pass the Senate and be signed into law this month.

Edwards secured \$650,000 to help the city of Waco improve coordination between the police department, fire department, EMS, and other emergency personnel by upgrading vital communications technology. The funding will replace analog consoles with digital radio consoles to ensure quicker response time and improve communication between departments. During operational activities, the Waco radio system serves as the unifying tie for approximately 25 fire departments, police departments, federal agencies and other vital emergency services.

Edwards, a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee said, "I believe we have an obligation to work closely with local law enforcement to protect our communities. This new equipment will help our officers respond more quickly to emergency calls with the information they need to protect our families."

Carinne Crider of the Waco Police Department said, "The funding that Congressman Chet Edwards helped secure for the Waco Police Department and Waco community will help upgrade our digital interoperable radio system to create true interoperable communications between the agencies in any situation."

Edwards also secured \$100,000 to help the City of McGregor add additional security features around the industrial area, including video surveillance and other technological upgrades that support law enforcement efforts. The addition of surveillance will deter crime in the industrial area, and the much needed technological upgrades will assist the City of McGregor in faster response time.

McGregor Police Chief Steve Foster said, "With the help of Congressman Edwards, our department will continue to make McGregor a safer place to live and do business."

Edwards also secured \$400,000 to help Baylor buy equipment and pay for research costs to test the carbon fiber composite materials for aerospace/aircraft structures. They are expected to partner with TSTC and L3 Communications on the project.

"This will allow Baylor researchers and their industry partners to promote economic growth in Central Texas, remain competitive, and increase quality technical undergraduate and graduate education in the Waco area," said Edwards.

Dr. Truell Hyde, Vice Provost for Research, Baylor University said, "Composites research is rapidly becoming essential to the local aviation industry which in turn is vital to the regional economy. This funding, provided by Representative Edwards, will greatly enhance Baylor's ability to conduct the composites research and development necessary for continued growth in this exciting field."

Edwards secured \$100,000 for a Technical Career Paths program for veterans at Texas State Technical College in Waco. The project includes assessment of skills and certifications earned in military service, screening for career interest and aptitude, and placement into fast-track programs designed to facilitate rapidly completed certificates or associate degrees, technical skills mastery certificates, or other vehicles to promote successful re-entry into the civilian workforce in high growth, high demand jobs.

"Ensuring our veterans have the opportunity to use their skills to transition smoothly from military life to a civilian career is the least we can do to honor their service and sacrifice for country," said Edwards.

Elton Stuckly Jr, President of TSTC said, "We are very excited about the funding for the Career Paths for Veterans program at TSTC. A number of our technical training programs are ideally suited for veterans, who often enter our training programs with skill sets and certifications that greatly reduce their time to completion. TSTC is rolling out a number of Technical Skills Mastery Certificates that will fit the Career Paths program very well. This type of program not only supports the veterans themselves, but also results in a positive impact on the Texas economy."

Finally, Edwards secured \$100,000 for the AVANCE Early Childhood Intervention and Family Support Program in Waco. These funds will help AVANCE serve 300 families from at-risk, low

income households with parenting education, early childhood development, ESL and GED classes.

"Investing in workforce training, and family support services will truly make a difference in the lives of our families and our community's economic future," said Edwards.

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